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best of Argentinians". Offspring of the merchant class, he was an intellectual—an optimistic, altruistic advocate of popular culture, and a constructive force which advanced his country toward his ideals. From a responsible government position, to which the king of Spain appointed him, youth of twenty-three that he was, in 1793, he sought to disseminate new ideas on economics in a bureaucratic atmosphere which smothered him. To improve the social conditions amid which he found himself, he established the third newspaper issued in Argentina. To the same end he advocated schools, and founded them. To alter political conditions, he labored for Argentine independence. Drawn into military life by his country's fight for freedom, he ran up for the first time the flag which still symbolizes Argentine nationality, and out of an undisciplined rebel horde, the conduct of which had antagonized the inhabitants of regions where it fought, he created an army with ideals of honor, lived up to by its officers and its men. In a revolutionary period Belgrano was serene, modest, and generously free from envy.

Considered from a certain point of view, he was a precursor. . . . Without the creative energy of those who are all originality and minus the stubborn persistence of those who succeed in perfecting their undertakings, he nevertheless cleared the path along which others were to pass to success.

Dr. Ravignani remarks that a centenary celebration is an occasion for eulogy rather than for the emission of a historian's cold judgment. "Every biographical study," he adds, "makes its principal object the determination of the man's influence upon his epoch, and of the extent to which it absorbed him. . . ." If a great influence and a thorough absorption are the hall-mark of a "hero" truly worthy "an essay *a lo Macaulay*", to quote Dr. Ravignani, then it would seem that Argentina is justified in hanging Belgrano's picture (as is done) in the schools, for this essay displays him as an efficacious advocate of popular education, in both the English and the Spanish sense of that word.

I. A. WRIGHT.

*Justo Arosemena (Obra Premiada en el Concurso del Centenario)*. By OCTAVIO MÉNDEZ PEREIRA. (Panamá: *Imprenta Nacional*, 1919. Pp. 568. Paper.)

Don Justo Arosemena (1817-1896) was a native of Panama and throughout his long and useful life, strongly attached to the interests of his section. At the same time as a citizen of Colombia, he played

an active part for nearly fifty years, in the various changes that marked the political development of that country. He was elected to membership in the Cabildo of Panama in 1839 and retired from his post as government representative in connection with the work of the Inter-oceanic Canal Company, in 1885. In the interim he had held almost every post of importance in Panama, including the governorship, had served as representative and senator from the province, department or state (according to Panama's varying status in the republic), and had taken a prominent part (although not an actively hostile one) in asserting the interests of that section against possible injustice at the hands of the Bogotá authorities. In the capital itself he not only represented Panama but during his younger years served the central government as a subordinate in the ministries of finance and foreign relations, and later in life held important diplomatic posts in Europe, United States, Peru, Chile, and Venezuela. During this same period he maintained active business connections with many of the chief enterprises of the Isthmus. Through these connections he kept in touch with New York, London, and other financial centers. His personal activities as well as political efforts were extensive, reasonably successful, and highly honorable in character.

As a journalist, Don Justo stood high in Peru and Chile, as well as in his native Panama. He was an orator of distinction, a prolific writer, an effective pamphleteer, an author of enduring reputation. His *Estudios Constitucionales* passed through several editions, each one enriched by the results of his own political experience. During his residence abroad it was his good fortune to take an active part in the Congress at Lima, in 1864, and to work in favor of the Wyse-Lessups Canal Contract in the United States. He thus participated in two measures of importance for Colombia, but without achieving the permanent results his efforts merited. He took part in framing the liberal Constitution formed at Río Negro in 1863, and while he recognized later that this document must be seriously modified, regretted that the conservative reaction of 1886 thrust it wholly aside. This overturn practically ended his political career, but not his business and literary labors.

A mere enumeration of Arosemena's activities is impressive. A catalogue of his publications, ephemeral though many of them are, shows his manifold intellectual power. Criminal and political problems, measures of social reform, philosophical and religious topics, juridical measures, general literature—all alike inspire his ready pen.

It is as political writer that he will best be remembered and few have done so much to reveal the spirit of moderate liberalism that ruled in Colombia during the mid years of the last century.

Dr. Méndez Pereira has performed his task well. The thirty-six chapters show the productive work as well as the political activity of his hero. His biography is extremely favorable but not too partisan. He quotes extensively from Arosemena's writings, so that the reader may gain an idea of their character and recognize the importance of the present work for an understanding of the various issues that formerly divided Colombians. He thinks that Arosemena would have favored the cause of Panama, had he survived to 1903, but we may well believe he would have exerted his influence against precipitate separation. The work, as the sub-title indicates, gained the prize in the competition authorized by the Panamanian government in commemoration of the centenary of Arosemena's birth.

ISAAC JOSLIN COX.

*Cuba y los Cubanos.* By E. K. MAPES, Professor of Modern Languages, Westminster College, Fulton, Missouri, and M. F. DE VELASCO, Professor of Languages, Havana, Cuba. (New York, Chicago, Boston, etc.: The Gregg Publishing Company. [c 1920] Pp. viii, 213. \$1.00.)

This little textbook, which is designed for the use of students studying the Spanish language, was compiled in the belief "that the ideal foreign language reader is produced by the collaboration of a native of the country treated in the text, who furnishes first-hand information as to facts and authentic knowledge of the language as actually spoken there, and an American teacher of the language, who is familiar with the pedagogical features necessary to adapt the material to the needs of the American classroom". The result has been a very interesting book and one that can be used to advantage because of its practical bearing.

In fact, this is more than a language reader. It could be read to advantage by persons about to visit Cuba for the first time, for it gives in small compass considerable useful information. The book is divided into twenty-eight chapters. The first five of these are formed into a section entitled "La llegada" (The arrival) and give a few salient and interesting facts regarding the approach to the island and life thereon. This section is followed by sections on "La Isla" (The island), of four